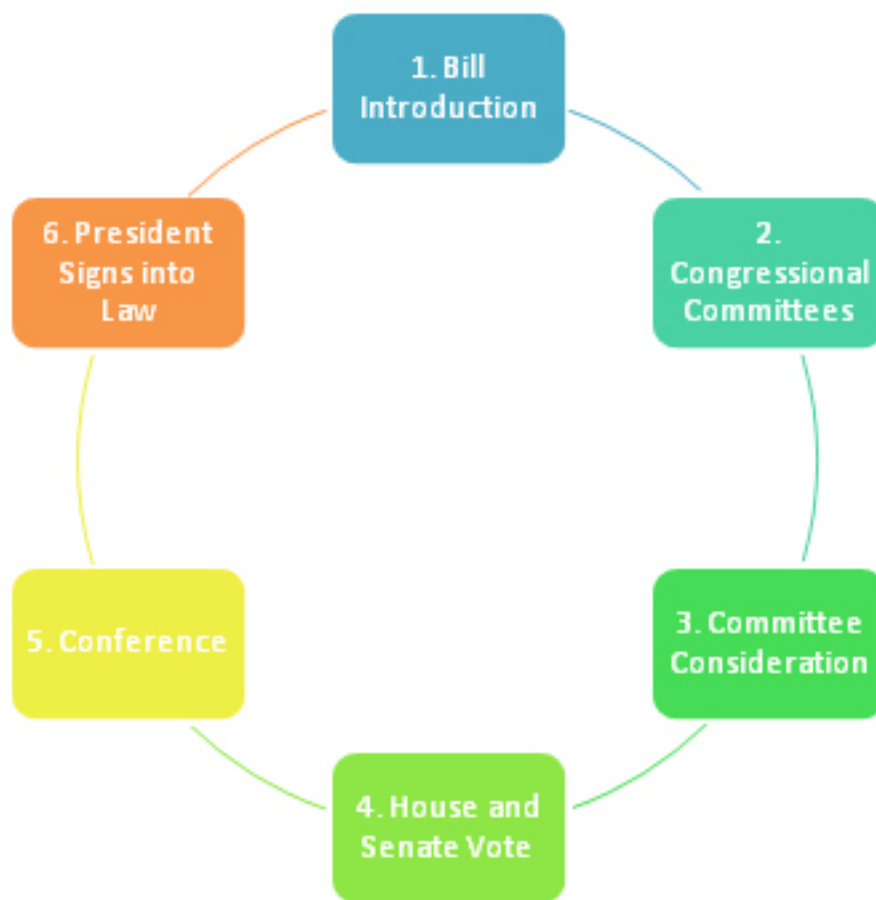


The U.S. Congress has two chambers: the U.S. House of Representatives (435 members) and the Senate (100 members). Typically, a bill becomes law in the following way:



- 1.
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1. [Bill Introduction](#)
2. [Congressional Committees](#)
3. [Committee Consideration](#)
4. [House and Senate Vote](#)

5. [Conference](#)
6. [President Signs into Law](#)

1) **Bill Introduction.** One or more Members of Congress introduce a bill. The person that originally introduces the bill is called the sponsor. Other members that wish to support the bill by adding their names to the legislation are called co-sponsors. The bill can be introduced simultaneously in both chambers (House and Senate), or it can be introduced only in one chamber.

2) **Congressional Committee.** After introduction, each bill will be referred to at least one committee for consideration. Multiple committees may consider various parts of the same bill if the bill contains proposed legislation under the jurisdiction of more than one committee. Congressional Committees cover a comprehensive list of issues including judiciary, energy and commerce, Social Security [and many more](#).

3) **Committee Consideration.** Committees have the responsibility to consider whether to recommend the bill to the full House or Senate. Frequently committees will ask for reports from relevant governmental agencies and departments and hold hearing about the bill to hear from experts regarding the impact of the proposal.

The chair of the subcommittee schedules the bill for a hearing and a vote. Once the bill passes the subcommittee by majority vote, it then moves on to full committee. The same process happens in full committee.

If a committee decides not to recommend a bill to the full House or Senate, it will simply table it, or stop discussion of it, and the bill will go no further. The proponent of the bill is able to

re-introduce it at a later time.

4) **House and Senate Vote.** When the bill makes its way out of committee, it moves to the floor for a full vote where Members of the House or Senate debate the bill. The bill may be amended during the debate process. The bill must pass by a majority vote. If the bill does pass in either House or the Senate, then it moves to the other chamber to undergo a vote.

5) **Conference.** Sometimes, two different versions of the bill pass in each chamber. If this is the case, a conference committee meets to resolve differences. Committee members from either chamber familiar with the bill sit as part of the conference committee to draft a compromise version of the bill. The conference version of the bill that this committee writes must then pass by majority vote in each chamber.

6) **President Signs Into Law.** After the same bill has been approved by both chambers of Congress, the bill moves to the President, who can sign it, allow it to become law without a signature within ten days or veto it. If the President vetoes a bill, it goes back to whichever chamber originated it, with the President's objections and each Chamber of Congress can vote on the vetoed bill. To pass a bill over the President's objections requires a two-thirds vote in each Chamber.